

Rocky Mountain Radical: Myron W. Reed, Christian Socialist

ISSN 0003-4827

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Recommended Citation

"Rocky Mountain Radical: Myron W. Reed, Christian Socialist." *The Annals of Iowa* 57 (1998), 278-280.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.10185>

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in general, were keenly aware that material gain could jeopardize spiritual welfare and Christian witness. Despite such misgivings, they pursued both objectives with evangelical zeal.

While there is much to commend in this biography, there are two weaknesses. Kimbrough, in attempting to establish context for his analysis, allows Tarkington to disappear on occasion. In one such example, despite presenting a fine synopsis of how slavery affected antebellum evangelicalism, Kimbrough overlooks his subject for nearly eight pages (122-29). Second, though charting Tarkington's quest for respectability, Kimbrough stops short of developing the incongruity between Tarkington's perceived indebtedness near the end of his life and the reality of his "sizeable estate" (149). To be fair, though, these are minor flaws. In the main, Kimbrough seems ever conscious of his mission. If anything, he entices readers to explore the issues in greater detail on their own.

Kimbrough's biography is rich in detail and anecdote. He mines Tarkington's autobiography with great success. Moreover, he demonstrates a facility with the secondary literature (the footnotes and bibliography should not be overlooked). The twenty-five illustrations are an added bonus. One cannot help but be struck by the forcefulness of the photos of pioneer Methodists such as Tarkington and his collaborator Allen Wiley.

In sum, David Kimbrough has produced an excellent volume. This is an important work for two reasons. Kimbrough successfully argues that Joseph Tarkington was a significant figure in the development of Methodism in Indiana. Moreover, Tarkington's life provides an excellent lens for examining the maturation of evangelicalism in the nineteenth-century Midwest. One wishes that Kimbrough had developed the latter in greater detail, but he has challenged others to pursue this end.

Rocky Mountain Radical: Myron W. Reed, Christian Socialist, by James A. Denton. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997. x, 206 pp. Illustration, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY JACOB H. DORN, WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

Originally a doctoral dissertation, James A. Denton's study of Myron W. Reed (1836-1899) emphasizes the interplay between the controversial minister's social and political ideas and conditions in Denver, Colorado, as it experienced transformation from a mining camp into a metropolis. A transplanted New Englander who served churches in

New Orleans, Milwaukee, and Indianapolis before coming to Denver's First Congregational Church in 1884, Reed believed that the West, more malleable than the East, offered a fresh opportunity to fulfill the United States' divine mission by creating a just, truly democratic society. Denton carefully traces Denver's political, economic, and social history to explain Reed's career there. He shows that, while idealists such as Reed articulated an alternative to the replication in Denver of older patterns of social hierarchy and private power, their hopes exceeded their grasp.

Denton organizes Reed's work around four topics: politics, charity, labor, and "Christian Socialism," each of which receives a chapter. Although this produces some redundancy, it is clearer than a chronological presentation would be. Associating first with the minority Democrats and then with the Populists, Reed consistently defended underdogs, attacked Republican dogmas on the tariff and currency, and proposed creative ventures in government planning and public services. He promoted the "scientific charity" principles of coordination and efficiency while insisting that structural causes of unemployment were primary and refusing ever to turn away any needy person. He befriended unions and advocated shorter hours, profit sharing, and industrial arbitration. A controversial sermon during the Cripple Creek mining strike in 1894 led to his resignation from First Congregational and the subsequent formation of a non-sectarian Broadway Temple congregation.

Denton's decision to make Reed's Christian socialism a separate category, rather than the comprehensive framework for all his interests, may reflect the vagueness of that term's meaning for both Reed and Denton. Like many clerical contemporaries, Reed defined socialism inconsistently, sometimes using standard socialist language about collective ownership, but also speaking of cooperation rather than individualism and using other platitudinous phrasing. His political choices, Democrats and Populists rather than more radical movements that were available in Denver, corroborate his indefiniteness about what socialism, or a distinctive Christian socialism, meant. Denton's treatment would have been sharper had he sorted out, compared, and analyzed Reed's pronouncements.

Because Denton's placement of Reed in the context of Denver's history is admirable, the inadequacy of his coverage of some other matters is surprising. Reed *was* a pastor, and his sermons are the primary source for his ideas. Yet his congregation receives scant attention. How he got along with it as long as he did and his resignation in 1894 especially merit fuller exploration. Denton also neglects

efforts to create a radical Christian politics elsewhere in the nation. Several brief references to W. D. P. Bliss ignore the Society of Christian Socialists and *The Dawn*, both of which had influence across the nation after 1889. There is no reference to George D. Herron, the radical social prophet at Iowa College (Grinnell) who launched an influential "Kingdom movement" in the mid-1890s and helped found the Socialist Party of America in 1901. Denton neither sets Reed's ideas in the context of these networks, nor does he seem to have explored whether Reed had connections with them. Without a broader base of evidence, the assertion that Reed was the "foremost Christian Socialist in the American West from 1884 to 1899" (vii) remains unsubstantiated.

Nevertheless, this is a welcome study of a man too long neglected. It illustrates the ideological probing and political uncertainty of radical social Christianity in the late nineteenth century and gives that radicalism a concrete regional focus.

All the Modern Conveniences: American Household Plumbing, 1840-1890, by Maureen Ogle. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996. xxi, 191 pp. Illustrations, notes, note on sources, index. \$39.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY H. J. EISENMAN, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ROLLA

Is household plumbing a worthy subject of inquiry for historians, especially historians of technology? With her book, *All the Modern Conveniences*, Maureen Ogle answers with a strong "yes." A product of Iowa State University's Program in History of Technology and Science, Ogle has transformed her Ph.D. dissertation into a well-crafted treatise that is part of the respected and growing Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology series. She focuses on the cultural and social factors that affected Americans' embrace of household plumbing from 1840 to 1890, eschewing a history of only the hardware for a more interesting and valuable perspective—the role of the country's beliefs and values in shaping technological change. Relying on a wide range of primary and secondary sources, including sanitation reports (among them the municipal records of Keokuk, Iowa), patent records, scientific journals, and consumer catalogues, Ogle argues persuasively that mid-nineteenth-century Americans used indoor plumbing chiefly to make their households modern and convenient. Concerns about community sanitation played a very small role in the use of this technology until late in the

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